

BOARD OF CERTIFICATION OF OPERATORS OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES

Meeting Minutes: December 3, 2008

**Members in Attendance: Julia Forgue, Fred Kurdziel, Bill Patenaude,
and Tom White**

Others in Attendance: Traci Pena – RIDEM

Peter Eldridge and Kevin Ventura, W. Warwick WWTF

The December 2008 was called to order at 9:35 a.m.

The first item addressed was the issue of Mr. Ventura, an operator at the West Warwick WWTF who has been employed for seventeen (17) years , currently as the Chief of Maintenance. Mr. Ventura was denied to sit for the Fall 2008 Grade 3 exam because he was not in a position of operations. Mr. Ventura noted that he would like to sit for the Grade 3 exam, stating that his work as Chief of Maintenance was in fact involved with plant operations, as his position routinely reported to supervisors regarding process control management. Mr. Eldridge, his supervisor, stated that as an example, Mr. Ventura is involved in routine morning meeting with operators, as well as other management processes involving process control. Mr. Patenaude noted that if such operational involvement were a regular part of Mr. Ventura's duties he would need to document said duties over and above what has been done in previous applications. Mr. Patenaude

informed Mr. Ventura that because of the close of the current application period he could not apply for the December exam, but could for the next one. He suggested that Mr. Ventura start studying now, visit other plants and document as best as he can the operational duties that he performs.

Mr. Patenaude then informed the Board that the Superintendent at the West Warwick WWTF will be retiring; the town has yet to notify the Board or DEM regarding plans for a successor, etc. Phone calls by DEM's O&M section to the Town Manager have not been returned; the next step is a letter from DEM.

Messers Eldridge and Ventura then left the meeting.

The next agenda item was the review of the draft November 2008 open meeting minutes.

Mr. White motioned to approve the minutes with minor grammatical changes. Mr. Patenaude seconded the motion. All other members present voted in favor, and as such, the motion passed. Ms. Forgue abstained from the vote as she was not at the previous meeting.

The next agenda item was the review of the draft Executive Session meeting minutes from the November 2008 meeting.

Mr. Patenaude motioned to approve the minutes with minor

grammatical changes. Mr. Kurdziel seconded the motion. All other members present voted in favor, as such the motion passed. Ms. Forgue abstained from the vote as she was not present at the previous meeting.

The next item discussed were Operator Applications. Mr. Patenaude presented the application for Grade 1 by Mr. Stephen Kruwell, an operator presently enrolled in Boot Camp. Mr. Kruwell has two months experience at another facility from a year ago, with a span of time in which Mr. Kruwell was not employed at a wastewater treatment facility in Rhode Island. Mr. Patenaude informed the Board that they could count those two months in operations, which would provide him with a Grade 1 license two months earlier (as his OIT would complete a full year two months earlier). Or the Board could disregard the two months, and so give the applicant two months additional time to secure a Grade 1 license if necessary. Mr. Patenaude noted he brought this before the full Board as it was a unique situation in which an operator had prior time as an operator for consideration of a Grade 1, and as such there was no prior administrative precedent. After a brief discussion, Mr. White and Ms. Forgue noted that Mr. Patenaude should honor the two months, and so count all past operational experience.

The next agenda item were consideration of changes to the regulations. Mr. Patenaude noted that, per the previous meeting, a brief review of the regulations did warrant consideration of revisions,

especially to the educational and experiential substitutions in Rule 8, which were developed when the regulations were first adopted in the late 1970s and have not been updated since. Having reviewed the language himself, Mr. Patenaude opened the meeting to brainstorming by the Board. Discussion continued about Rule 8(b)(1), and its applicability to the modern wastewater industry. Mr. Patenaude felt such issues should be considered as well by Dr. Wright, as the member who represents education. Ms. Forgue agreed that the language is confusing. Other areas of discussion involved the requirement that a high school diploma or equivalency be standard for all grades of licensure. Ms. Forgue said the Regulations should specifically state that the applicants must provide proof of experience which related to specific operational duties, which would have to be detailed and concise. The matter will be continued at upcoming meetings.

The next item on the agenda was any outstanding enforcement matters. Mr. Patenaude gave the Board an update from the Narragansett Bay Commission Field's Point facility regarding a request for information about a previous failure of chlorination operations.

The next order was Board member updates. Mr. Patenaude noted that he had been in discussion with Dr. Wright regarding his schedule, which conflicts with the Board's meeting schedule of the first Wednesday of each month. Mr. Patenaude asked the Governors office

if an appointed member could allow a designee during extended periods of schedule conflict, but such a provision was not allowable. As such Dr. Wright will be unable to seek reappointment on the Board should his current schedule appear to remain. Mr. Patenaude would be in contact with Dr. Wright to discuss the matter.

In final business was a request from AWWA to obtain operator address so they can notify operators what educational opportunities they have available. Mr. Patenaude noted that in the past the Board has not given out such information, and has given out only the addresses of the facilities themselves. The Board agreed with this alternative.

Per a request at an earlier meeting, Mr. Patenaude then gave out the Boot Camp syllabus for consideration of time substitutions for experience in considering examination applications. As the entire Board was not present, and as Mr. Schock had requested the syllabus, the matter was continued until the next meeting.

With no further business Mr. Patenaude motioned to adjournment. Mr. Kurdziel seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor, and as such the motion passed.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 7, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. at the RIDEM Offices located at 235 Promenade St., Providence, RI 02908.